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AUTHOR Rahkonen, Carl J.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

A study was done of the communication and attitudes of college deans, chairpersons, and faculty in college music departments towards teaching, research, publication, community service, and institutional support. The study surveyed a representative sample of deans, chairs, and faculty from various disciplines at 453 institutions. The final sample included 142 deans, 392 department chairs, and 1,172 faculty from 9 disciplines. The study then separated music department information from other data which produced data from 29 deans, 41 chairs, and 98 music faculty. Results of analysis of the music department data indicated that: (1) one-third of faculty attend out-of-state professional meetings; (2) 25 percent of faculty had no funds for professional development; (3) funding for computers and books was seen as good or excellent by most deans but not by faculty; and (4) a much higher percentage of deans and chairs believed that they gave adequate merit salary increases than did the faculty. Results also showed significant differences in attitude among deans, chairs and faculty on weight that should be assigned to teaching, research, publication, committee work, activity in professional organization and community service. With respect to research, department chairs placed greater emphasis on research and publication than did either deans or faculty. (JB)

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Communication Among Music Faculty, Department Chairs and Deans in American Higher Education

Carl J. Rahkonen
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

J. Richard McFerron
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Lee H. Bowker
Humboldt State University

David M. Lynch
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Mark Krusec
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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ABSTRACT

Communication Among Music Faculty, Department Chairs and Deans in American Higher Education

This study presents data from a survey of college deans, chairpersons and faculty in music departments on their attitudes towards teaching, research, publication, community service and institutional support. It analyzes communication, or perhaps the lack of it, among these groups in American higher education.

A research team conducted a large general survey representing nine disciplines. They matched the results from the faculty of each department with their own deans and chairs, making it possible to draw stronger conclusions than if all the results were pooled together. After separating the music department information from the rest of the survey, they produced tables showing the results for specific questions.

The results show that while communication among music faculty, department chairs and deans is generally good, there is room for improvement, particularly in the areas of research, publication, support for professional development and merit salary increases.

INTRODUCTION

The following study presents data from a survey of college deans, chairpersons and music faculty on their attitudes towards teaching, research, publication, community service and institutional support. It analyzes communication, or perhaps the lack of it, among these groups in American higher education. While previous research in this area has generally relied on oral descriptions, anecdotes, and case studies, the present study provides broader and more empirical information.

METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted and analyzed by a team of researchers with individual areas of specialization. We surveyed 453 institutions selected from the Barron's Profiles of American Colleges, using techniques to ensure that the sample was representative. After telephoning every institution to get the names of deans, chairs and faculty, we sent questionnaires to each individual. Fifty-four percent of the deans and chairs responded, as did thirty-eight

percent of the faculty. The final sample included 142 deans, 392 department chairs and 1,172 faculty who represented nine disciplines: Biology, Chemistry, English, History, Mathematics, Music, Political Science, Psychology and Sociology.

Our statistician matched the results from the faculty of each department with their own deans and chairs, making it possible to draw stronger conclusions than if all the results were pooled together. For comparative purposes, the samples of deans and chairs were weighted to match that of respondents in the corresponding faculty sample. In other words, a chair or dean represented by two faculty members in the final sample was counted as two chairs or two deans in a table based on faculty respondents.

The multi-stage sampling design, the modest return rates, and the disproportionate stratified composition of the final samples make it impossible to claim that the data presented in this study are representative of the universe of American colleges and universities. However, we believe that these data provide a realistic view of teaching conditions in American higher education, because of the consistency among the nine disciplinary sets in this study, plus a similar high degree of consistency with previous studies (Lynch and Bowker 1984 ; Lynch and Bowker 1985 ; Bowker, Lynch and McFerron 1985).

RESULTS

In May 1991, the research team published a monograph entitled Teaching and Research Support in Higher Education (McFerron et. al. 1991) which gives a complete description of the project's methodology and summarizes the findings. After these results became known, we planned to enlist the help of specialists from each of the academic disciplines represented in the survey to analyze the results from their own specialties. This was done for Sociology, with an article entitled "Normative Conflict and the Gradient of Ignorance" (Bowker et. al. 1991). I was asked to examine the results from music departments. The research team separated music department information from the rest of the survey and provided me with results for specific questions. The following tables represent 29 deans, 41 chairs and 98 music faculty who completed the survey.

One interest of the research team was the amount of institutional support for attending out-of-state scholarly meetings. Those of us familiar with music departments can anticipate that the support for such attendance is not great, but that there is some limited support. First, faculty were asked how many out-of-state professional meetings they attended in the past

academic year. Table 1 shows that approximately one-third of those surveyed attended no out-of-state professional meetings, one-third attended at least one meeting, and one-third attended two or more meetings.

TABLE 1. Annual Out of State Professional Meeting Attendance of Music Faculty

Number of Meetings Attended	Number of Faculty	Proportion of Faculty %
0	33	34
1	34	35
2	15	15
3	08	08
4 or more	08	08

N = 98

Next we asked what percentage of the cost of out-of-state meeting attendance was reimbursed by the institution. Table 2 shows that approximately one-third of the music faculty surveyed had no costs reimbursed. Approximately one-forth received between 1 and 50%, and one-third received between 50 and 90% of the cost reimbursed. The results showed what we had anticipated, that there is some support for attending out-of-state meetings, but that support is fairly limited.

TABLE 2. Reimbursed Costs for Annual Out-of-State Professional Meeting Attendance of Music Faculty

Proportion of Costs Reimbursed (%)	Number of Faculty	Proportion of Faculty %
None	27	35
1-25	08	10
26-50	11	14
51-75	11	14
75-90	15	19
More than 90	06	08

N = 78

Another question dealt with total institutional funds paid for all forms of professional development (Table 3). Approximately, one-fourth of the music faculty had no funds for professional development, another one-fourth had between \$1-\$250, one-third had between \$250-\$1000, and only 9% had more than \$1000.

TABLE 3. Total Institutional Funds Paid Annually for all forms of Professional Development of Music Faculty

Support Level ($)	Number of Faculty	Proportion of Faculty %
0	26	28
1-250	24	26
251-500	16	17
501-1,000	18	19
1,001-2,000	03	03
More than 2,000	06	07

N = 93

A related question dealt with the adequacy of funding in various categories. We separated the answers given by deans, department chairs and faculty for comparison (Table 4). The results point out some areas of possibly varying perceptions or problems in communication. Funding for "computers" and for "library books" were seen as "good" or "excellent" by a majority of the deans, but by a minority of music faculty. Similarly, adequate funding for "sabbaticals to improve teaching" was rated as excellent or good

TABLE 4. Adequacy of Funds for Selected Teaching and Research Support Activities as Rated by Music Deans, Chairs, and Faculty

Resource	Respondents Rating Adequacy as Good or Excellent (%)*		
	Deans	Chairs	Faculty
Conference travel	36	15	24
Grant development travel	10	18	15
Research by senior professors	30	17	17
Research by untenured professors	26	17	10
Computers	66	58	47
Research equipment	18	20	15
Library books	52	69	49
Library journals	42	48	45
Grant development personnel	13	23	28
Offering courses often enough	75	82	70
Research assistants	21	21	15
Teaching assistants	18	37	18
Sabbaticals to improve teaching	65	56	38
Sabbaticals to do research	58	51	39

N = 95 * Percentages of deans and chairs are based on matched sets of respondents, each containing a unique faculty member and his or her department chair and dean.

by 65% of the deans, but by only 38% of their own faculty. Almost as dramatic a difference may be seen in the "Sabbaticals to do Research" category, with 58% of the deans and 51% of the chairs rating these as "good" or "excellent" and only 39% of the faculty.

Another provocative question dealt with merit salary increases for superior teaching, research and public service. The results (Table 5) show that a much higher percentage of the deans and chairs believed that they gave adequate merit salary increases, than did the faculty.

TABLE 5. Merit Salary Increases for Teaching, Research and Public Service as Seen by Music Deans, Chairs and Faculty

Area of Faculty Professional Performance	Respondents Indicating the use of Merit Salary Increases (%)*		
	Deans	Chairs	Faculty
Teaching	86	77	53
Research	78	76	55
Public Service	50	54	32

N = 95 * Percentages of deans and chairs are based on matched sets of respondents, each containing a unique faculty member and the matching department chair and dean.

Perhaps the most intriguing question in the survey dealt with tenure weights assigned to teaching, research, publication, committee work, activity in professional organizations and community service. The results showed differences in attitudes among the deans, chairs and faculty, some of which could be anticipated and some which were unexpected. We would expect the greatest difference in attitude to be between deans and faculty, and a smaller difference between deans and chairs, or the chairs and faculty. In other words, the further removed a person is from the top of the administrative structure, the more we would expect their attitudes to differ from those at the top. This was born out in the general survey and in the specific analysis of Sociology faculty, which was called a "Gradient of Ignorance" (Bowker et. al. 1991).

The survey of the music departments presented a strange anomaly. Deans, chairs and faculty agreed that teaching was the most important criterion for tenure, but when considering research, a wider difference separated the deans and department chairs, than the deans and the faculty. This pattern may also be seen in the answers concerning publication, activity in professional organizations and community service. The department chairs placed a greater emphasis on research, publication and community service than did either the deans or faculty (Table 6).

TABLE 6. Tenure weights assigned to Selected Faculty Areas of Professional Performance as Seen by Music Deans, Chairs and Faculty

Area of Faculty Professional Performance	Tenure Weight	Proportion of Respondents (%)* Deans	Chairs	Faculty
Teaching	1	75	79	77
Research	1 or 2	57	75	38
Publication	1 or 2	46	57	48
Committees	1, 2 or 3	49	49	52
Professional organizations	5 or 6	35	71	63
Community service	6	48	20	39

N = 95 * High tenure weights are slightly over represented due to ties in rankings. Percentages of deans and chairs are based on matched sets of respondents, each containing a unique faculty member and the matching department chair and dean.

There is no immediate explanation for these differences, especially since similar differences were not found the general survey nor in the analysis of Sociology faculty, but perhaps the anomaly for music departments might be explained in part as a misunderstanding of the question. Teaching in music departments is qualitatively different from that of many other departments, since much of the teaching takes place one-on-one, in private lessons. Research in music departments is usually conducted by musicologists and

music education faculty, whereas the performance faculty give recitals in lieu of research. Some of the respondents may have thought of "research" and "publication" in their traditional sense, even though the question stated that it included "professional performance" and "creative activity" as a part of "research." The anomaly remains one of those problems that deserves further study.

CONCLUSION

The results of this survey show that while communication among music faculty, department chairs and deans is generally good, there is room for improvement, particularly in the areas of research, publication, support for professional development and merit salary increases.

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